

Sunday 24th November 2013, MayDayRooms

Present:

Fabian, Grace, Anthony, Amelia, Pauline, Tim, Stefan, Dan, George Caffentzis

Brainstorm

- Radical/Autonomous Education
- Structural Adjustment Programme
- Neo-liberal educational strategies piloted in Africa
- Critical Education forum
- Archives in general, links to Glasgow
- Open Education provide pre-educational resources to the world, linked to corporate strategies of neo-colonialism
- Arts experiments in education
- Role of development in urban planning
- Archives in general
- Self definition
- Representing world cultures

GC:

Starts with election of Ronald Reagan, get out of USA. Invited to teach Calabar (slave port) in 1983. In Nigeria, near border with Cameroons. GC there 1983-1987. SF at Port Harcourt from 1984. In 1982 the debt crisis spread from Mexico to Africa/Nigeria. World Bank & IMF impose conditions (Structural Adjustment Programme: SAP) on aid which then caused significant public debate. IMF dropped out. WB conditionality led to privatisation and commodification of education. Nigerian students very vigorous defending themselves versus the police and the army. GC told that if he continued his political activity he would be deported. Wages dropped by 90% arising from crisis (inflation). GC left in 1987. Many other academics he knew had left often going to the U.S. Nigerian youth inspiring in terms of their aspirations and enthusiasm. Gathered together African exiles in US who kept an eye on the places where they had been involved. Neo-liberal universities became quite quickly transformed into businesses. Interested in Africa, although mainstream media did not give adequate to student struggles across Africa, even though student activities in China (Tienamen Square, 1989) were. Kampala Statement outlined a notion of academic freedom different from that popular in USA. KS switched focus from freedom of the professor to freedom of the student to have access to education (without fees).

American Association of Academic Professors.

In 1991 CAFA was set up and goes on to 2006. It started off quite isolated mainly with African academics who were exiles and refugees, who had resisted the SAP.

1. Discovery that there was an African Students Movement
2. Anti-globalisation movement developed in 1994 to defame the World Bank on their 50th anniversary. CAFA part of African section of this movement. Link African students movement to anti-globalisation demonstrators, particularly around the time of Seattle. In this context drew up a chronology of African student struggles.

Much of the work was done to critique what the World Bank was actually about. Campaign against WB from participating in the African Studies Association. WB responded saying you don't understand us! GC offered job to work with liberal African-American institute. Continued to hound WB as regards impact on African education and universities. Anti-globalisation movement became very large and Nigerian students followed world events,

through wall posters on campus. Initially primarily Anglophone, but after Ossain XXX became involved developed in Francophone Africa as well. Continuation of organisation in new circumstances after 2006 did not seem relevant.

Denis Brutus was a South African athlete and poet in ANC shot by South African Police and arrested. Left RSA and went to USA. Reagan administration tried to get him deported in 1980. Campaign in USA to stop deportation. He organised Olympic boycott of South Africa. After end of apartheid Dennis campaigned against ANC capitulation to IMF/WB. He had a big impact on the development of the anti-globalisation/World Justice movement. Denis was linked to CAFA.

1. Education
2. Neo-Liberalism
3. Struggle in different contexts
4. Archives

Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility

Read articles 1-8

Came out of a conference at University of Dar es salam, Ernest . . . of Congo

- access to all and a high standard of education - producing value together.
- What is the function of the intellectual, turning experience into words? How does this work in a colonial situation? How much was the agenda of knowledge at a steep angle as regards an Afro-centric viewpoint.
 - Some people said universities are all neo-colonial institutions. Students were putting their lives on the line in defence of the universities. Also universities were drawing students from a broader range of society i.e. peasants and workers
 - No universities in colonial structures. Struggle from independence to create universities. Universities were full of promise which were snuffed out by World Bank. SAP applied in quite rigid way. Departments became little business in themselves. Departments would not collaborate with each other: who is going to pay for a particular course.
 - Book by Mahmood Dade *Scholars in the Market Place*
 - In contemporary UK venture capitalists worried about differences between curiosity driven knowledge and market driven knowledge. Not sure how to manage investments. and monetise curiosity driven knowledge

Archives:

How do we bring the archive to life. Not merely for researchers to take information out, but also to put information in. How can MDR and like minded archives work to make a more interactive archive.

Is Kampala Statement on-line? Wikipedia?

Wikipedia available on-line for mobiles in Africa?

Updating archive with more contemporary material. African students where are they now? Are some of them in the UK?

SOAS Panafrican Students Union

SOAS has received funding for PhD research - could be useful.

Asylum seekers communities here, problems with access to education, could develop those links.

Show continuity.

Drop off of political activity in African American community in the 1970s. Key agitators moved “back to Africa”. Some Black Panthers went to African countries with left wing regimes. Drop off linked to increased imprisonment. In 1960s there was a very conscious relationship, but it broke down by the 1980s/1990s.

Platform - an oil based pressure group active in London with links in Nigeria, e.g. around Shell's activity there, and more recently BP.

Sylvia Federici based at Port Harcourt, where there were lots of studies of the impact of the oil industry.

History of SAP is yet to be written: starts off as very rigid, but develops in different ways in response to struggles. Official decisions are not always put into effect.

This story needs to be written, wherever these sorts of things are.

Abahali base m'jelo interesting organisation in South Africa.

Action Points:

1. Provide brief introduction to the existing index.
2. Circulate this to SOAS Pan African Students Association, SOAS academics and Platform
3. FT to contact SOAS/SOAS PASA
4. Grace to contact Platform
5. Anthony and others to research other groups active in the area.
6. Research tactical methodologies of how people organise and educate themselves.